Postal services in U.P.

†955. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new post offices, speed post counters proposed to be set up during the current financial year in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) the steps Government have taken to improve postal services in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) During the current financial year i.e. 2003-04, the target is to open 20 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs), 1 Department Sub Office (DSO) and 1 Speed Post Counter in Uttar Pradesh, subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms.

(b) The Department has continuously sought to increase access to postal services in rural areas throughout the country, including Uttar Pradesh by opening Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices/ Departmental Sub Offices and Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras, subject to norms and availability of resources under plan. It also provides for daily delivery of dak at the doorstep, collection of mails from letter boxes and sale of postage stamps and stationery at the doorstep. Efforts have also been made to induct technology, specifically for transmission of money orders, provision of e-post facility etc.

Postal scam in Bihar

956. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CBI has busted recently a sensational postal scam in Bihar, in which men behind dubious firms teamed up with two senior officials to dupe people and cause huge losses to the Department of Posts;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what corrective steps have been taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) A case of dubious mail order business in Purnea Postal Division, Bihar, was detected during departmental investigation. The matter was then handed over to the CBI.

(b) and (c) Irregular booking of Value Payable Letters and payment of Money Orders to the fake firms have been stopped pending verification of the genuineness of such firms. Action has been taken against errant departmental staff. The case is still under investigation by the CBI.

Public awareness campaign through IT visits

†957. SHRIMATI KUK KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to start public awareness campaign through information technology visits;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it would be successful with the present rate of literacy among the public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Extension of Green Card facilities

958. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have requested the UK, the US and the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.